

well. In 2002, she was awarded the Maine State Chamber Volunteer of the Year Award. In 2004, she earned the Chamber of Commerce Ken Additon Small Business Advocate Award, and most recently, Diane was recognized as the Number one U.S. Small Business Administration 504 Lender in the State of Maine by the Granite State Development Corp.

It is always with some lingering sadness that I pass along my best wishes for the retirement of an individual such as Ms. McManus. Though retirement is well-deserved and will begin a new and exciting chapter in her life, it also signifies that Maine is losing one of its most dedicated and valued employees. Diane's perpetual willingness to believe in Maine businesses has touched the lives of countless entrepreneurs throughout the state. I wish her the very best going forward as she takes this exciting next step.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Diane McManus on her retirement and honoring her 25 years of impeccable commitment to her field and her community.

RECOGNIZING AMERICA'S MINERS ON NATIONAL MINERS DAY

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 6, 2011

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following.

Watching coal-miners at work, you realize momentarily what different universes people inhabit.—George Orwell.

George Orwell was humbled by coal miners—brave and earnest individuals who work hard hours, often in cramped, damp, lamp-lit corners far below the surface of the Earth. He was shocked by the living and working conditions he witnessed while he boarded in the coal mining communities of Northern England, accompanying the miners underground to see, first-hand, the hot, horrible conditions under which they labored.

"Down there," he wrote, "where coal is dug is a sort of world apart which one can quite easily go through life without ever hearing about. . . . It is so with all types of manual work; it keeps us alive, and we are oblivious of its existence. More than anyone else, perhaps, the miner can stand as the type of the manual worker, not only because his work is so exaggeratedly awful, but also because it is so vitally necessary and yet so remote from our experience, so invisible, as it were, that we are capable of forgetting it as we forget the blood in our veins."

Even now, in an age of Twitter and reality TV, when every aspect of life can be beamed around the world in an instant, it is too easy to forget about the miner and his daily digging chores, sequestered far from our view, though intimately connected to so many of our daily needs and desires.

Yet, from time to time, something happens to remind us of that separate world. Unfortunately, that something is, too often, a tragedy, like the explosion at Massey Energy's Upper Big Branch Mine in Southern West Virginia, on April 5, 2010, that took the lives, far too soon, of 29 hardworking men.

In the hours following that explosion, reporters from around the Nation flocked to the mine

site, nestled in a rural mountain fold not far from my home. Every phase of the attempted rescue effort was captured and broadcast around the globe, and for many tense and worrisome hours, coal miners were very much on the minds of the world, holding its collective breath and hoping for a miracle—a miracle that was not be.

Now, after the passing of many months, it is clear that the loss of those 29 miners was not due to one unpreventable, fateful incident, but, instead, it was the result of a pervasive, long-running, callous corporate culture that put production and profit far above people.

It is no coincidence that, today, the Mine Safety and Health Administration is releasing its final report on the UBB disaster. This day, December 6th—the anniversary of the 1907 Monongah Mine disaster, the worst mining disaster in American history—is also the Congressionally designated "National Miners Day."

I am proud to have been the author of the House Resolution that sought to establish this date as a milestone of national recognition and remembrance of America's miners. It is a shameful truth that each advance in our Nation's mine safety system has come only after a mine disaster. But I hope that this day might alter that tradition and serve to bring the miner out from the dark of the mines into the national light for at least one day each year. It seems to me far preferable that our national conscience be kindled not by tragedy, but, instead, by celebration.

And so I urge that, at least on this one day each year, the Congress and all Americans will turn our attention to recognizing the contributions that miners have made to our Nation—its economic vitality and its military strength. And that we will take this annual opportunity to help ensure that these men and women are assured of safe, healthy, humane conditions in which to earn an honest living. America and American miners deserve no less.

HONORING LEWIS WILLIAMS

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 6, 2011

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and highlight the distinguished life and career of the Honorable Lew Williams, who passed away sadly on December 3rd, 2011. Mr. Williams was a member of the Pinellas County School Board and a local educator. His impact on our community will be felt for years to come. He leaves behind two children and his wife, Arthurene.

Mr. Williams was elected to the Pinellas County School Board in 2010. However, over his lifetime, his impact was profound. Quiet and reserved, he chose his words carefully in a way that would be sure to have the most impact. His colleagues on the School Board have noted that he often had the ability to drive debates to a solution, while being one of the quietest individuals in the room. In his time on the Board, he was able to move the district in a different direction and was instrumental in leading the fight for changes in the district's superintendent position.

Lew Williams was born in Blakely, Georgia, but moved to Florida at a young age. Growing

up in public housing, he saw education as a means to future success. Two educators saw his potential for achievement and helped pay his way for college. He graduated from Allen University with a bachelor's degree and South Carolina State College with a master's degree.

Mr. Williams was instilled with the same optimistic belief in those around him. He started out as a social studies teacher, but eventually went on to become a principal at five different Pinellas County schools. In 2010, Mr. Williams was elected to the School Board seat for District 7. Local educational leaders, such as the current head of the local teachers union, credit him for seeing leadership in them when he chose to hire them. His hard work, sacrifice and determination have truly impacted our community and continue to do so.

The Tampa Bay community mourns his loss and is so thankful for his many years of service to students and our community. I ask that you and all Americans remember such a remarkable educator for his ability to inspire success in others.

HONORING DR. CHARLES GRINDSTAFF

HON. H. MORGAN GRIFFITH

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 6, 2011

Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I submit these remarks in memory of Dr. Charles Grindstaff, a great man, devoted educator, and public servant from Southwest Virginia. Dr. Grindstaff left us on December 2, 2011.

Born on September 3, 1947, in Bluefield, W. Va., Dr. Grindstaff was raised in the small town of Bishop, Va. He later earned degrees from Tazewell High School, East Tennessee State University, Radford University, and NOVA University. After God and family, Dr. Grindstaff's passion was education. Since 1969, Dr. Grindstaff—often known simply as "Dr. G"—served students as a teacher, administrator, and professor in Tazewell County Public Schools, Horry County, SC Schools, and at Concord University in Athens, W. Va. For over 15 years, Dr. Grindstaff also served the Town of Tazewell as a councilman and as mayor until the time of his death. He was an avid sportsman, enjoyed performing in local theatre, and sharing his musical talents. Dr. Grindstaff leaves behind his wife Suzanne, daughters Heather and Christina, and his son Andy, as well as three grandchildren.

Dr. Grindstaff, through both his work in the classroom and local government, impacted countless lives. He was also my District Director Michelle Bostic Jenkins' principal at Jewell Ridge Elementary and taught with her mother for several years. After a flood on the Clinch River destroyed many of their belongings, Dr. Grindstaff was there willing to help. He was well known for his exceptional goodwill and dedication to the Tazewell community. I am honored to pay tribute to this great man's many contributions. His legacy and influence will be long remembered in Tazewell and throughout Southwest Virginia. He will be missed, but never forgotten.